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Thursday, 25 May 2000, 3.30 p.m.
New York

Chairman	Mr. Wang Yingfan	(China)
Members	Argentina	Mr. Mársico
	Bangladesh	Mr. Chowdhury
	Canada	Mr. Vámos-Goldman
	France	Mr. Teixeira da Silva
	Jamaica	Miss Durrant
	Malaysia	Mr. Mohammad Kamal
	Mali	Mr. Keita
	Namibia	Mr. Andjaba
	Netherlands	Mr. van Walsum
	Russian Federation	Mr. Granovsky
	Tunisia	Mr. Ben Mustapha
	Ukraine	Mr. Krokhmal
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Eldon
	United States of America	Ms. Soderberg

Agenda

The situation in East Timor

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00-44996 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 3.45 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in East Timor

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Hédi Annabi, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Annabi to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now resume its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Hédi Annabi, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations. I call on Mr. Annabi.

Mr. Annabi: This briefing will cover, as the Council requested, the developments in East Timor since this item was last discussed in the same format on 27 April. I will mention briefly the main political developments, the security situation, economic matters, governance and public administration and the situation of the refugees.

As regards the main political developments, the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) has continued its efforts to normalize relations between Indonesia and East Timor. A new round of talks in Jogjakarta, Indonesia, began last Monday and was completed today. The agenda of those discussions included mechanisms to resolve claims regarding assets and liabilities, the transfer of civil and administrative archives back to East Timor, the settlement of pension obligations to former East Timorese civil servants, the establishment of a joint border commission and, of particular importance, the implementation of the commitment to allow unimpeded access between the Oecussi enclave and the rest of East Timor. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello, is scheduled to visit Jakarta on 29 May for further high-level discussions with the Government of Indonesia. I should also mention that Mr. Xanana Gusmao paid a very successful visit to Jakarta on 28 April.

In East Timor itself, there has been an increase in political activity. Political parties have opened offices and held meetings in the districts. Freitlin, the longstanding pro-independence party, has held a series of regional conferences culminating in a national party conference held from 15-20 May, attended by some 1,250 delegates. The main theme of the congress was the need to replace the political in-fighting of the past with democratic practices and pluralism.

UNTAET has intensified its consultations with the East Timorese on all important policy issues affecting the conduct of the interim administration. The National Consultative Council has met five times. In addition to approving a regulation banning illegal logging and an amendment of the existing regulation on the judiciary, the National Consultative Council has collaborated closely with UNTAET in preparing for the Lisbon donor conference, both in its formal sessions and during three joint UNTAET/World Bank workshops. At the heart of this effort is, of course, the preparation of East Timor's budget for the period July 2000 to June 2001. As members of the Council are aware, the Lisbon conference is scheduled to be held from 21 to 23 June.

In order to promote public debate on key policy questions, public hearings have also been instituted under the aegis of the National Consultative Council. The first hearing, which was devoted to taxation issues, was held on 17 May and included members of the business community, non-governmental organizations and UNTAET officials.

The overall security situation has remained stable over the past month. Militia activity on the border with West Timor has declined. The deployment of an additional Indonesian battalion to the border, and the implementation of the 11 April Memorandum of Understanding for Tactical Coordination between the Indonesian armed forces (TNI) and UNTAET has had a beneficial and positive impact.

I mentioned last month that UNTAET was reviewing the strength of its military component. It has now initiated a reduction by some 500 troops, which

will be pulled out of the eastern sector. The situation in that sector has been calm and stable from the outset. This will be achieved by October through scheduled troop rotations as well as through the reduction of the Force Logistic Group, which will be reduced to a squadron. Some of its tasks will be performed by contractors. The current level of UNTAET troops deployed in East Timor stands at 8,396; it will as a result of these reductions come down to 7,896 by October.

The Armed Forces for the National Liberation of East Timor (FALINTIL) has remained cantoned at Aileu. A number of FALINTIL personnel were attached to UNTAET's military sector headquarters, where they are assisting in liaison with the East Timorese population. Others have begun to leave cantonment at Aileu to find employment. In order to improve the living conditions in Aileu, relief assistance has been provided to vulnerable groups there.

The law and order situation in East Timor has remained a concern. Crime is still high, and considerable effort is required to contain the readiness of some East Timorese to resort to violence. During the past month there was, fortunately, only one significant incident. On 30 April, a fight between youth groups at a Dili sports demonstration spilled over to the nearby central market and continued sporadically for several hours, resulting in four injuries and 18 arrests. Following that incident, UNTAET's police were authorized to carry side arms.

Two prisons were opened, in Becora and in Gleno. This has greatly facilitated the work of the police and the judiciary. Plans are under way to rehabilitate two more prisons, in Baucau and in Manatuto. The judicial system has begun to function, and the first pre-trial public hearing was held from 11 to 15 May.

Pursuant to the 7 April Memorandum of Understanding on judicial and legal and human rights cooperation, the Attorney-General of Indonesia requested documentation compiled by UNTAET on five criminal cases associated with last year's violence. UNTAET is in contact with Indonesian officials to work out the necessary arrangements for making the requested information available.

UNTAET's investigation into the 1999 violence has continued. In Oecussi, 20 bodies were exhumed of persons killed in a massacre on 8 September 1999 in a location known as Passabe. UNTAET has also continued to monitor the current human rights situation in East Timor with particular emphasis on episodes of intimidation and harassment against ethnic and religious minorities.

Turning to economic matters, the number of private businesses registered in East Timor, both foreign and Timorese, has risen from 1,200 last month to over 2,000 today, creating new employment opportunities in the private sector. Private sector loans are also being made to prospective small businesses through a project funded by the World Bank.

The implementation of UNTAET's Quick Impact Projects has continued. A total of 4,473 persons have been employed as a result of those projects, which are being conducted in various parts of East Timor. An additional 14,606 persons have been employed under the Temporary Employment Project of the United States Agency for International Development, which has injected some $3.3 million into the local economy. The Japanese Agency for International Cooperation has also employed more than 11,000 persons on a temporary basis through several reconstruction projects, mainly road rehabilitation, for an estimated cost of $9.8 million.

East Timor's road network, which was already impaired by years of neglect and heavy use, has deteriorated dangerously as a result of an unusually long wet season. Recent flooding has resulted in a number of major roads being cut, temporarily isolating some district centres and impeding UNTAET's work in all sectors. Los Palos, Viqueque and Suai were hardest hit. Considerable resources will be required to rehabilitate the road system once the dry season sets in.

As regards governance and public administration, the central fiscal authority has became fully operational with the appointment of the head and deputy head of the authority on 17 May. Customs and immigrations operations have begun on the western border with the opening of a border post at Batugade. To date, $1,059,000 has been collected in customs and sales tax. This is a modest beginning, but it is a beginning nonetheless.

The civil service campus was inaugurated on 8 May, and will serve as the headquarters of the civil service academy in East Timor. The academy will be the umbrella organization for all efforts to provide public service training, including courses for the

unemployed. The number of civil servants has continued to rise, and now stands at more than 4,500, including some 2,050 teachers.

The number of students enrolled in schools has also risen, by more than 23,000, to a total of over 163,000.

An Interim Health Authority has been fully established and is presently staffed with 29 East Timorese health professionals, 13 district health officers and 7 international staff. The first office of the East Timor Postal Service was opened in Dili on 29 April, followed by a Baucau branch on the next day.

Regarding the East Timorese refugees, only some 1,000 additional refugees have returned to East Timor over the past month. This brings the total number of returnees to a little more than 161,000.

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates that some 90,000 remain, principally in West Timor. It should be noted in this context that the Indonesian authorities estimate that there around 125,000 refugees remaining in West Timor. The census, which I mentioned last month and which was to be conducted by UNHCR was somewhat delayed, but it has now begun. We will bring the results to the attention of the Council in due course.

The militias active in the camps have continued their campaign of disinformation about the conditions in East Timor.

As mentioned earlier, East Timor suffered severe flooding, particularly in Suai, Viqueque and Los Palos. However, as members of the Council are aware, the situation in West Timor, as a result of the floods there, is much worse. Tens of thousands of people have been displaced, 126 persons are confirmed dead, most of them women and children. About half of the casualties of these floods in West Timor were East Timorese who were living in low-lying refugee camps.

In conclusion, as I have tried to show in the course of this briefing, UNTAET has continued during the past month to make progress in the implementation of its mandate, in particular in the areas of institution- and capacity-building and in the delivery of government services. This progress may not be as quick as we or the Timorese would like it to be, but it is steady progress, and we believe that its pace will increase in the weeks and months to come.

UNTAET has also continued to expand its consultative mechanisms with the East Timorese in order to enable them to gain a better understanding of the challenges at hand and to involve them as much as possible in the decision-making process so that they can prepare for independence, which is, of course, the ultimate goal of UNTAET.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Mr. Annabi for his comprehensive briefing. I now give the floor to the members of the Council.

Mr. Eldon (United Kingdom): Your stewardship of the Council, Mr. President, has proved eminently wise this month, and I can do no better than to echo your wise words of thanks to Assistant Secretary-General Annabi. Again, his briefing has been extremely useful and extremely comprehensive. It demonstrates the scale of the difficulties that the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) has to face. It really is quite a remarkable mission, in the sense of having to build an infrastructure from the bottom up and prepare a territory for independence with very little to start from. It also demonstrates the ingenuity with which those challenges are being tackled and the progress that is being made.

I would like to start almost in reverse order compared to Mr. Annabi, by considering refugees. I find it interesting to note that the rate of return over the last month, and since the Council was last briefed, is down to only about 1,000 persons. We think that it is now time to clarify how many people remain in the refugee camps in West Timor, and we are pleased that the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) census is going ahead. It is clearly very important that the remaining refugees should be registered expeditiously — not least because of the activities of the militia and not least because it will be very important to know and to get a good feel for the reasons why they have not returned. The register will be a useful tool in helping to create the conditions for those still in the camps to return home. We hope that UNHCR and the Indonesian Government will quickly be able to resolve issues such as pension payments, which are currently restraining many of the refugees from making that leap. Those who wish to return should be allowed to do so swiftly and safely.

In this connection, we are particularly concerned about the effects of the recent floods in West Timor.

We were very pleased that UNTAET was able to provide assistance to the Indonesian authorities in some areas, in coping with the floods, but it is particularly troubling that so many of those who have been killed or displaced are refugees from East Timor. We fully support anything that UNTAET can do to provide further assistance in the relief efforts. I think we should all think very carefully about what we can do in relation to those poor people who have effectively had to suffer a double whammy, both of displacement from East Timor and now of natural disaster. What I had to say earlier about the need for refugee returns applies doubly to those people who find themselves flooded out in West Timor.

I would like to turn now to the question of resources. It is almost a truism that UNTAET can be fully effective only if it is properly resourced. We continue to have some concern that the work of the Mission is being inhibited by a lack of funds on the ground. It would be helpful to have some indication from Mr. Annabi of the current position on expenditure from the United Nations Trust Fund. We understand that although some $20 million has been pledged, spending has so far been only a small proportion of that. We need also to ensure that disbursement is proceeding apace from the World Bank trust fund. We hope that UNTAET, the Secretariat and others involved can work to identify the barriers to disbursement, and we would be very open to whatever can be done to streamline the procedures so that more of the money can be spent more quickly.

I have to say that recently there has been a sense on the ground of — well, it would be an exaggeration to say bureaucracy run riot, but certainly the bureaucratic impediments to getting things done seem to be on the increase rather than the reverse. Of course, a lot of these procedures are not within the Council's area of responsibility, but, for our part, we stand ready to do what we can to help reduce such obstacles while of course retaining sufficient checks on expenditure.

It would also be helpful to know whether there is anything more that could be done to ensure that UNTAET has the specialist staff it needs to do some of the things it has to do by way of building up infrastructure, developing governmental capacity and so forth. As a member of a diplomatic service renowned for its reliance on generalists, I have to say that is a good thing, but there are limits to the extent to which they can deal with some specialist issues where obviously technical expertise is required and necessary. It is particularly important to try to make progress on both funding and capacity before next month's donor conference in Lisbon. I am sure that the importance of that meeting will not be lost on any of us around this table.

I would also welcome the Secretariat's comments on its longer-term vision for United Nations engagement in East Timor. During our last briefing Mr. Annabi very helpfully mentioned the series of benchmarks or objectives that would be necessary before independence could be reached. As I said at that time, we have to maintain a careful balance between not pushing too hard and not pushing hard enough. I am not sure that "push" is quite the right verb to use, but what is important is that as East Timor moves to independence it should have adequate capacity to cope with independence in governance, governmental services, security, democratic institutions and a whole host of things.

I think the work that the Secretariat has already done in mapping out an exit strategy, to put it a little crudely, is very useful. But there is a need to develop timelines to ensure that the mission completes its job in the right timescale and in the right way. It would be very helpful to have any comments that Mr. Annabi might wish to offer on the future shape of UNTAET or indeed on the United Nations role in East Timor post-UNTAET.

I want to conclude my intervention at this briefing in the same way that I concluded my intervention last time. None of what I have said is meant to be criticism. I want to pay tribute to the quite remarkable job that UNTAET has done on the ground and that those backstopping UNTAET have done in the Secretariat in New York. They deserve our congratulations and our thanks.

Ms. Soderberg (United States of America): I want once again to commend Assistant Secretary-General Annabi and his team, particularly the Secretary-General's Special Representative, Sergio Vieira de Mello, for a historic job that they are performing under very difficult circumstances in East Timor. This has been one of the very difficult challenges the United Nations has undertaken, and I think by all accounts they are doing a stellar job under very difficult circumstances. So we pay tribute to them once again.

I think the nature of the discussion today is in sharp contrast to what we were discussing only a few months ago here. The task of the United Nations is often to give the people of the world what President Clinton has often referred to as the chance to live the quiet miracle of a normal life, something many have been denied. While in the past few months, and certainly in the difficult months of last summer before and after the referendum and the violence that ensued, we were dealing with crises in life-saving situations, the question of militias and intimidation and all the problems that have resulted from difficulties surrounding last fall's events, today the events are shifting to the more normal tasks of how to rebuild a country, how to get the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund in there and how to get investors in there to begin to trade and integrate the economy of East Timor into the normal trading systems and normal economic systems. I think the simple nature of that shift in a discussion is a tribute first and foremost to the people of East Timor, who are pulling together and trying to move their country forward after a number of very difficult decades. I think the United Nations is working with them hand-in-hand in trying to move that forward in a way that we all need to commend.

The Nobel laureate José Ramos Horta, who has been working on behalf of the people of East Timor for many years, is here in the United States. We had the honour of speaking with him this morning, and I was struck by the nature of that conversation, talking about the normal functions of a government as opposed to a people in crisis. He deserves great credit for moving things forward. The more the international community and the United Nations can do to ensure that the situation in East Timor moves in that direction as quickly as possible, that will certainly help the people of East Timor rebuild their society.

I think the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) has made very substantial progress in establishing elements of a civil administration. There are obviously very frustrating delays in initiating projects from the UNTAET and the World Bank trust funds and in ensuring that the necessary personnel with the appropriate skills are in the field. In our briefing on 27 April, Assistant Secretary-General Annabi specifically mentioned the positive effect of our Government's temporary employment projects through the Agency for International Development. We have been trying to create temporary bilateral programmes to fill an immediate need while working to get the comprehensive United Nations and World Bank employment-generating projects on line. I encourage other Governments to look at ways that they could help in that. I think, as Ambassador Eldon mentioned, the World Bank review conference in Lisbon and the subsequent donors' conference will be a major point of reference for discussing these issues, but they will also hopefully bring tangible resources that certainly are much in need.

In previous briefings we have been fairly blunt in some of our concerns about the security situation on the ground with the militias and the failure of the Indonesian Government to appropriately rein in some of them. I think it has to be said that the Indonesian armed forces (TNI) have subsequently made efforts to end cooperation with the militias. We remain concerned about the need to permanently resolve the situation of the remaining refugees and to break up the militias definitively. It is worth pointing out that progress has been made on that. We commend that progress and want to continue to see it reinforced and made a permanent situation. Any backsliding into the previous concerns would obviously be of major concern to the Security Council. There are still militias on the ground, however, and I think that we have to continue to watch the situation so that it does not evolve into a threat in future that would cause many of us difficulties.

The Security Council acted very quickly in endorsing the need for UNTAET to assist in the floods in West Timor, and I think our actions there are a model for international cooperation to help in a humanitarian situation that assisted a number of refugee families in their decision to return to East Timor.

The decision to send these UNTAET helicopters, I think, was a concrete way that the UNTAET operation could assist all of the people of East Timor, and it enabled us to work in a very cooperative effort with Indonesia that will assist in developing further ties and cooperation. Also, I would commend the Secretary-General's decision to ask Mr. Vieira de Mello to travel to Fiji to deliver a strong message of concern over the situation there. That is obviously a situation that we are following very closely. We have called for the immediate release of the hostages and

certainly urge all the people of Fiji to resolve this crisis in a peaceful manner and in accordance with Fiji's Constitution.

On the issue of civilian police, I think that in East Timor they need to have the means to carry out their responsibilities effectively. In some areas, including in Dili and the western districts, the civilian police are currently armed, and we continue to believe that this policy should be considered throughout the territory of East Timor. I know that this is something that the United Nations has under discussion; I think it is important to have a consistent policy throughout the territory, particularly in areas where there are special needs on the ground.

UNTAET is now beginning to establish a functioning judiciary, and this is an area that we have been following with particular interest. I will repeat one story just to show how far things have come. There is now a new East Timor judicial system and a newly trained judge presiding over a hearing about the legality of continued detention of a Falintil member who is accused of killing a militia member on 22 September. This hearing was attended by 50 people, local and international, journalists and family members. To us it was a normal judicial function that would happen in any normal situation. José Ramos Horta noted that this was the first case of an East Timorese judge presiding in an East Timorese courtroom in nearly 500 years. I think that that small story represents just how far individuals have been able to make a difference in East Timor, and the United Nations should be rightly proud in noting its accomplishments.

In closing, I would just add that the people of East Timor are now actively discussing with the international community, the World Bank and possible investors how to develop their own country. I think it is up to the international community to remain engaged in East Timor — just because it is not on the front pages any more does not mean that there are not broad needs there, including for the sustained, continued engagement of the international community, albeit in the more traditional senses of trade, economic policies, investment and judicial functions. It is a tribute to the people of UNTAET and the people of East Timor that the conversation is shifting towards those types of day-to-day activities and away from the crises that we were dealing with just a few months ago.

Once again, I commend the United Nations for its efforts.

Mr. Teixeira da Silva (France) (*spoke in French*): My delegation would like to associate itself with the two preceding speakers in thanking Mr. Annabi and also in pointing out that we are quite aware of the magnitude and the difficulty of the tasks the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) is facing, as well as of the undeniable progress that has been made. The pace may seem slow, but this can obviously be explained by the state in which East Timor finds itself and also by the difficulties of mobilizing both human and financial resources. This is particularly true since after the tragic events of last year, East Timor is no longer on the front pages of the newspapers or seen in broadcast news, precisely because there is no tragedy. But the problem here is that international attention and interest have again declined.

I have two sets of comments and questions for Mr. Annabi, in addition to those already made by the two preceding speakers. I will address the security issue first. Mr. Annabi spoke of a crime rate that remains high: is this common crime, economic crime, or acts that have a political motive, committed by isolated elements or by organized anti-independence militia elements?

My second question regarding security is about the division of labour between the army and the UNTAET police. This is a problem we have faced in other operations — I am thinking in particular of Kosovo — where in stabilizing some situations the line may seem a bit fuzzy between the competence of international police and the competence of military units.

Regarding incidents that have taken place, I heard Mr. Annabi mention police intervention. What is the particular task of the military troops of UNTAET, and are there clear criteria for the division of tasks between the international police and units that are specifically military? Any clarification here would be most welcome. We note that UNTAET decided to reduce the military contingent by 500 men by October; that seems to us a step in the right direction. Beyond October, are there other plans to further reduce the military element, or is it thought that there is a need not to move too quickly in view of the situation? But to correctly assess that, we need to have a rather clear view of the division

of labour between the police units and the military units.

My last point in this area: could Mr. Annabi provide more information regarding the training of local police, since, indeed, the goal here was to have local police take over from the international police units?

My second comment is to supplement the question raised by Ambassador Eldon concerning the problem of financing the UNTAET Trust Fund and the World Bank trust fund. There is a third pillar here which we must not forget: the peacekeeping budget, the special budget of UNTAET. Any indications regarding the state of contributions and the gap between the necessary budget and contributions would be most welcome, because above all this mission needs to function. Does the present state of contributions not represent an obstacle to the proper functioning of this mission?

Mr. Vámos-Goldman (Canada): I would like to join previous speakers in thanking Mr. Annabi for his briefing.

First, I would like to express Canada's condolences over the lives lost in the recent flooding in East and West Timor and to congratulate the joint efforts of aid agencies, the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) and the Indonesian Government.

Turning to the issue of refugees, we are encouraged by the decision of the Indonesian Government to establish a transitional period beyond its 31 March 2000 deadline for the return of East Timorese refugees in West Timor. Canada believes that the early and voluntary return of these refugees or their permanent resettlement in Indonesia is necessary for their own security and for the stability of both East and West Timor.

While refugees continue to register to return to East Timor, we are concerned by the increasingly slow pace of this process resulting from the frailty of essential services and infrastructures in returnee communities, the unresolved question of pensions owed to former East Timorese civil servants and the continuing presence of militia and related misinformation campaigns in the camps of West Timor.

We welcome the recent establishment by the Indonesian Government of a panel to investigate the allegations of human rights violations in East Timor raised by the Indonesian Commission of Inquiry into Human Rights Violations in East Timor and by United Nations reports. It is important that the findings of these reports be investigated and prosecuted by independent and impartial judicial processes, consistent with international legal standards. It is equally important that those responsible for atrocities in East Timor be held accountable. In this regard, we also welcome the recent memorandum of understanding between UNTAET and the Indonesian Government, which provides for mutual assistance in investigating human rights violations.

Finally, like previous speakers, I should like to note the progress made by UNTAET to date in spite of difficulties on the ground. Canada supports UNTAET's strategy of consulting and involving the East Timorese closely in the rebuilding and administration of the territory. In this regard, we are encouraged by the recent decision to establish district advisory councils, which will bring together representatives from East Timorese civil society and the United Nations Transitional Administration at the local level.

Mr. Chowdhury (Bangladesh): I thank you wholeheartedly, Sir, for scheduling this open briefing on East Timor. We thank Mr. Annabi for his comprehensive briefing on the latest situation in that territory. It shows clearly that, since his last briefing, we have again covered some ground, which gives us reason for satisfaction. We would therefore begin by expressing our deep appreciation for the United Nations team in East Timor, led by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Sergio Vieira de Mello. We, in fact, thought that it would be possible for him to come and brief us this time.

On the return of refugees, recent reports say that, since early May, there has been a drastic drop in the number of refugees returning to East Timor. What is more disturbing is that the ostensible reason is the harassment of refugees inside East Timor. We would like to recall here that we attached particular importance to this issue in all our statements in the past. It is crucial to ensure that the process of the settling down of refugees be smooth in order to instil confidence in them and also positively to contribute to the question of national reconciliation. Everything should be done to encourage the refugees to return, and that should be done on the basis of real progress on the ground in areas of concern to them.

In the context of encouraging disparate militia elements to disband, we would like to welcome the initiative taken by the Government of Indonesia to ask these soldiers either to join its resettlement programmes or to resign and return to East Timor. Making the choice very clear to these trouble-mongers is a very positive attitude which we believe would facilitate the United Nations task considerably.

With regard to civil and judicial administration, we note with appreciation the signs of effective administration that have been apparent in recent days. The opening of the civil service campus and the commencement of training courses for the East Timorese civil service are very important developments and we commend the efforts of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) behind them. We believe that the regulation recently adopted on the establishment of foreign government representative offices will open up opportunities for more interaction with the international community and facilitate communication and understanding of the situation on the ground in East Timor. We are happy to note that the Administration has started the collection of customs duties, which will help to improve the financial situation. The first public review of a detention case is also a welcome sign that the judiciary has started functioning.

The recent extensive flooding in West Timor presented UNTAET with a difficult situation. The Council has agreed with the recommendation of the Secretary-General that UNTAET should respond to the request of the Government of Indonesia for assistance. As we mentioned at that time, this operation and the personnel involved should be covered by UNTAET's mandate. For UNTAET, it would be one more step towards closer cooperation with the Government of Indonesia, if that is so desired.

We welcome the preparatory work for next month's donor conference in Lisbon. We are also encouraged to note that the various employment-generating projects are contributing to the redress of the unemployment situation, as reported by Mr. Annabi.

Finally, the law and order situation remains an enduring concern to my delegation, as it adversely impacts on the return of refugees and the opportunities for development programmes.

Mr. Granovsky (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): At the outset, we wish to express our satisfaction that the holding of regular open briefings on East Timor is becoming part of the Security Council's customary practice. We believe that this is fully justified in the light of the situation in the territory and by the attention being paid to this question by the international community.

Our assessment of the development of the situation in East Timor and the activity of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) jibes with the analyses contained in statements made by members of the Council. In the interests of saving time, I shall not repeat them. I should like to add only that, together with the entire international community, we have followed with concern reports on the development of the emergency situation arising from the floods in West Timor. We express our condolences in connection with the loss of life and believe that we must express our satisfaction with the assistance rendered by UNTAET to the authorities of Indonesia in overcoming the consequences of that natural disaster.

The activity of the United Nations in East Timor is a serious test of its effectiveness and potential in resolving various kinds of problems. We pay due tribute to the successful efforts of UNTAET, and personally to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello.

Mr. Mársico (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, I wish to thank Mr. Annabi for the comprehensive and useful information he has given us. We note with satisfaction the positive evolution of the situation in East Timor, in particular as regards security. It should be stressed that, since early March, no incidents have been recorded along the frontier of the territory and that the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) has succeeded in developing good cooperation with the military authorities of Indonesia. It is also good to see the growing involvement of the East Timorese leaders in the decision-making process on the future of the territory. We believe that this initiative on the part of UNTAET will make it possible to create conditions for the development of the essential institutions and political framework for the independent life of East Timor.

In this context, I would like once again to express the appreciation and gratitude of the Argentine Republic for the excellent performance by Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello and all the personnel of UNTAET. In addition, we would like to congratulate the Indonesian authorities on their cooperative attitude towards the United Nations, a clear indication of which was the judicial process initiated against those responsible for the lamentable violent events that occurred in 1999. We trust that this positive trend will also help solve the refugee problem in West Timor.

With regard to the current situation on the island of Timor, I would like to express the solidarity and sorrow of the people and the Government of Argentina in respect of the serious flooding that has recently occurred. In this connection, we hope that UNTAET's assistance, and that of international humanitarian agencies, will help alleviate the suffering of those affected. It is also our hope that United Nations assistance will contribute to clearing up misinformation and preconceptions that apparently continue to exist in some refugee camps. This would make it easier for the people there to return to East Timor.

Lastly, I would like to ask Mr. Annabi about developments in the talks concerning the future of the Armed Forces for the National Liberation of East Timor (Falintil), especially in the light of the position of the leaders of East Timor regarding the creation of armed forces for a future independent State.

Mr. Mohammad Kamal (Malaysia): Like previous speakers, I would like to thank Mr. Hédi Annabi for the comprehensive update on the situation in East Timor which he has provided us this afternoon.

Malaysia continues to believe that the United Nations mission in East Timor continues to be a very difficult one. We recognize the daunting task that the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) and the international community face and the frustration that is exacerbated by, among other things, the very high expectations of the East Timorese people. UNTAET is, of course, doing excellent work and enjoys our full support. In this regard, we would like in particular to commend Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello and his staff for the high level of professionalism that they have demonstrated in implementing the difficult mandate assigned to them.

We note the recent developments in East Timor in laying the foundation for the future development of the country. Among these was the successful broadcast of the first programme on UNTAET television on 18 May. We also note that the draft of the broadcast media regulation was introduced in the National Consultative Council on the same day. At the same time, we welcome the reopening late last month in Dili of the East Timor Postal Service, which is part of the ongoing reconstruction of East Timor. These developments are further steps towards creating a sense of ownership among the people of East Timor.

We wish to express our appreciation to UNTAET for its prompt response in dealing with the recent emergency in West Timor as a result of the extensive flooding there. We note that UNTAET dispatched two helicopters on 18 May to evacuate the flood victims and to deliver humanitarian relief supplies. In this regard, we would like to underscore the goodwill displayed by the Indonesian Government in its cooperation with United Nations agencies to alleviate the hardships caused to the East Timorese refugees and to facilitate the coordination of relief efforts due to the floods in East Nusa Tenggara.

We further note that, despite some remaining difficulties, we are gratified to have just heard from Mr. Annabi that the overall security situation in East Timor is stable and that militia activities in the border areas have declined. However, we remain concerned at continuing reports of violence and crime in East Timor, and we find this situation unsettling. In particular, we wish to express our deep concern about reports of religious violence and the harassment of ethnic and religious minorities in East Timor, as Mr. Annabi just mentioned in his briefing. We call on UNTAET to take all necessary measures to protect these minorities. We urge the East Timorese leaders to prevent the recurrence of such violence and harassment, to work assiduously towards national reconciliation among the East Timorese and to inculcate the spirit of tolerance, trust and harmony among the population.

We are encouraged by UNTAET's decision to declare a policy of zero tolerance for individuals carrying objects that could be used as weapons, after the violent disturbances in late April in Dili. We also wish to welcome the holding of a two-day meeting in Jogjakarta on 24-25 May between the representatives of the Indonesian Government and UNTAET to discuss issues related to assets claims and liability, archives and other outstanding issues from the last round-table

negotiations, such as pensions, border issues and the establishment of a joint border commission.

We note the strain the refugee crisis is putting on the local population in terms of overcrowding and occupation of land in West Timor. Malaysia believes that one of the most viable solutions to the refugee crisis must include the possibility of repatriation. We welcome the decision of the Government of Indonesia to improve the distribution of food rations and basic services in the camps in West Timor. We also wish to welcome the opening of the first land border crossing between East Timor and Indonesia on 3 May, which is another positive step towards normalcy.

In conclusion, it is our firm belief that the Council must continue to regularly follow developments in the situation in East Timor and to continue this format of open briefing, which my delegation firmly believes will also benefit the larger membership of our Organization on this very important issue.

Mr. van Walsum (Netherlands): We, too, would like to thank Assistant Secretary-General Annabi for a very useful and informative briefing. Before commenting on some of the information we received from him today, I would like once again to express my delegation's appreciation for all the work that is being done by the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) under very difficult circumstances.

Let me begin by focusing on West Timor. My delegation is concerned that many thousands of refugees still remain there. I have a few specific questions and would be grateful if Mr. Annabi could give me equally specific replies, although I understand that may not always be the case. My first question concerns the process of the registration of refugees in the camps of West Timor. We would like to know exactly how this is carried out. Is the registration merely a matter of counting the people, or will the refugees be asked where in East Timor they are from, whether they wish to return and, if so, why they have not yet done so? The last question is of obvious relevance.

My next question here is when the registration process will be completed, and when its results will be available.

Many of the remaining refugees were presumably pro-Indonesian. Could the Secretariat elaborate on the efforts made to convince these people that it is safe for them to return, and tell us to what extent these efforts have the desired effect? Of course, this leads to the preliminary question of what is being done in East Timor to ensure that it is indeed safe for these people to return?

It is of deep concern to the Netherlands that, according to our information, militia activity and intimidation continue unabated, in particular in Kupang, where the presence of East Timorese and Indonesian military and militia leaders brought back from East Timor is considerable. Apparently, personnel of the Indonesian armed forces (TNI) are still not reintegrated into the normal military command and control structures, but remain stuck in the refugee camps. We are convinced that the central authorities in Jakarta are trying to rein in the militias, and we appreciate the difficulties they may have in seeing their instructions fully implemented on the ground. Nevertheless, the Government of Indonesia has to step up its efforts in this regard. In reminding Indonesia of its responsibilities in West Timor, we are not interfering in its domestic affairs.

Let me repeat the gist of paragraph 12 of resolution 1272 (1999), which was adopted exactly seven months ago today. On that occasion, the Security Council stressed that it was the responsibility of the Indonesian authorities to take immediate and effective measures to ensure the safe return of refugees in West Timor and other parts of Indonesia to East Timor, the security of refugees, and the civilian and humanitarian character of refugee camps and settlements, in particular by curbing the violent and intimidatory activities of the militias there. All of that continues to be valid today, with the exception of the word "immediate", which obviously has lost its meaning in a resolution that is seven months old.

On the positive side, it is encouraging to hear that cooperation between the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) and the TNI along the border is developing satisfactorily. However, the Council should be cautious in drawing from this the conclusion that as a result the military component of UNTAET may now be downsized. The Netherlands is of the opinion that, as part of the process leading to a possible decision to that effect, the Council should receive a separate briefing on the military and security

situation in East Timor, including the state of the militias in West Timor. On the basis of that briefing the Council could then decide on the strength of the military component required to enable UNTAET to carry out that part of its mandate which concerns the provision of security throughout the territory of East Timor.

This is an important matter for my delegation. In October, when we discussed the wording of resolution 1272 (1999), the Netherlands strongly defended the figure of up to 8,950 troops, as had been recommended by the Secretary-General. On 27 April, in the Security Council, Mr. Annabi informed us that UNTAET was then reviewing the possibility of reducing the strength of its military component, and promised us that the result of that review would be brought to the attention of the Security Council. Today, we have not heard anything that could be described as the result of the review, but instead we have been informed of the decision to reduce the strength of the military component from 8,396 to 7,896 by October.

We had expected a somewhat different procedure. If the peaceful conditions in the eastern part of East Timor allow for some downsizing, there is also the option of relocation which could have been considered. At any rate, my delegation feels that the Security Council should be given an opportunity to consider the whole military and security situation, and we are looking forward to a specific briefing, either in another open meeting or in consultations of the whole.

We are looking forward to receiving the independent expert study currently under preparation on a possible national East Timorese defence force. When can we expect it? Apparently, there have been questions as to whether it is appropriate for the United Nations to become involved in the establishment of a military force. For its part, the Netherlands would consider it entirely appropriate and in keeping with UNTAET's mandate of nation-building in East Timor if the United Nations also dealt with the establishment of a military force for the purpose of self-defence.

Of course, expert assistance by friendly countries could be sought, including perhaps that of some countries members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations, and not automatically excluding Indonesia. We are very well aware of the sensitivities involved, and these should of course be taken into account. But we should also realize that an independent East Timor will eventually establish a military force, and it is better to have this done at a time and in a manner which give the international community the opportunity to ensure that the development of that force, like that of the other indigenous East Timorese structures for security, conforms to the standards of civilian control, democratic accountability and observance of international human rights norms and standards.

A measure of the extent to which those standards are met by those security structures could be included in the benchmarks which, according to Mr. Annabi, could serve to gauge East Timor's fitness for independence. Are the East Timorese leaders in full agreement with those benchmarks? Does the Secretariat intend to develop the benchmarks further?

Finally, having mentioned the military cooperation between UNTAET and the TNI, I should like also to address the issue of cooperation in the area of human rights and legal affairs on the basis of the Memorandum of Understanding signed on 7 April. The Netherlands would be very interested to hear how this cooperation is taking shape in practice, in particular with regard to investigating and prosecuting human rights violations. Recently, the Indonesian Attorney-General, Mr. Darusman, stated that the first trials would take place perhaps as early as this month.

Miss Durrant (Jamaica): Like previous speakers, I wish to thank the Assistant Secretary-General, Mr. Annabi, for his briefing on the current situation in East Timor. We commend the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello, and the staff of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET).

We note in particular that over the past few months UNTAET has directed its focus and redoubled its efforts to ensure that the East Timorese people are more and more involved in the process of rehabilitation and reconstruction. This, in my delegation's view, is the only path to the sustainability of institutions in East Timor and to ensuring that the requisite local capacity and ownership are created.

We welcome in particular the recent opening of the civil service campus, which will provide training and which in fact houses the Public Service Commission. We will follow closely the progress of training in basic administration and in leadership and supervisory skills. UNTAET must also be commended

for having moved swiftly to establish the administrative units and departments that could form the basis for the future East Timorese Government agencies.

At the same time, my delegation believes that care has to be taken to ensure that the structures will not be too costly for an independent East Timor to operate. It is, after all, a small territory, with fewer than 1 million persons, and a mostly agricultural population.

We have been told by Mr. Annabi that the law and order situation has improved. Nevertheless, the role and effectiveness of the civilian police component of UNTAET in maintaining law and order and developing a credible, professional and impartial East Timorese police force remains critical. We therefore urge that top priority be given to the quick and full deployment of this component of the mission.

My delegation wishes to take this opportunity to express our condolences to the families of those who lost their lives in the recent flooding. This flooding, we note, also affected the refugee camps in West Timor and a total of some 50,000 persons. UNTAET and the humanitarian agencies must be commended for their speedy response to the crisis. We also commend the Government of Indonesia for its actions and note its efforts in coordinating relief.

The number of returns of refugees to East Timor now stands at more than 161,000. While the number of returns seems to demonstrate that there is a growing level of confidence in the situation in East Timor and that the fear for personal safety may have diminished, it is important that the conditions for peaceful and safe returns be created, if those still in the refugee camps are to return. This, we believe, is a significant factor in the process of rehabilitation.

The employment situation in East Timor continues to be of concern to my delegation. We note that the transitional employment programme has provided employment for a number of persons in the 13 districts of East Timor, in a wide range of areas. We are encouraged that this initiative has generated employment, but remain concerned that the employment initiative must focus on long-term rehabilitation. The quick-fix approach will, in the long-term, leave gaps and generate problems.

My delegation would be interested to hear about the progress in the small-enterprise projects spearheaded by the World Bank, which envisaged providing loans to East Timorese enterprises and reviving the local economy. Like the delegation of the United Kingdom, we would also like to hear more about the trust fund for the East Timor programme, particularly in the area of agriculture. We also welcome the health sector programme, which provides support to the Interim Health Authority and which will revamp the health system and develop appropriate policies and systems.

Turning to another subject, we continue to believe that those responsible for gross violations of human rights in East Timor must be brought to justice. In view of the information provided by Mr. Annabi, it is clear that UNTAET must continue its investigative work and its monitoring of human rights violations. We also wish to thank the Government of Indonesia for the cooperation it has demonstrated with UNTAET. We hope that the Lisbon donors' conference, which is scheduled for 21 to 23 June, will attract the funds required, and we wish to thank those Governments that have already contributed to East Timor's development.

In conclusion, my delegation acknowledges that the challenges in East Timor are indeed great, but remarkable progress has been achieved in a few short months. The process there is a gradual one, at the end of which a new, independent and viable country will emerge. We will therefore continue to support the work of UNTAET and to show our solidarity with the people of East Timor.

Mr. Andjaba (Namibia): I wish to thank Mr. Annabi for his useful and informative briefing on the situation in East Timor. My delegation appreciates the continuing progress in the work of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) regarding the administration, rebuilding and rehabilitation of East Timor.

We note with appreciation that the National Consultative Council has been carrying out its functions. We would be most grateful to hear from Mr. Annabi specifically on how progress in national reconciliation among the people of East Timor is proceeding. We believe that this is one of the very important elements of the peace process in East Timor.

We commend in particular the personal efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello. The inauguration of the Civil Service Academy is a very positive achievement,

since the Academy will play a vital role in the future development of the human resources of East Timor. Similarly, the establishment of the first television broadcast in East Timor and the opening of the first land-border crossing between East Timor and Indonesia are positive developments. The important role of the media during peacekeeping operations cannot be overemphasized.

The safe return of refugees from West to East Timor remains one of the main outstanding matters regarding the situation in East Timor. It is unfortunate that the militias are continuing their campaign in the refugee camps in West Timor. We regret the large number of deaths and widespread destruction caused by the intense flooding that continues to ravage West Timor. It is unfortunate that at this crucial juncture nature should add to the deaths and large-scale displacements. We express our profound sympathy and heartfelt condolences.

We commend UNTAET for its efforts to rescue and assist the victims of these floods. We trust that enough resources will be made available to salvage the situation. In particular, we wish to echo the importance of next month's Lisbon donors' conference.

Mr. Ben Mustapha (Tunisia) (*spoke in French*): We join other members of the Council in thanking Assistant Secretary-General Annabi for his comprehensive statement.

Despite the efforts made by the Indonesian authorities in cooperation with the United Nations to resolve all of the problems related to the return of the refugees, this issue remains a source of concern and continues to contribute to instability in the region.

The recent floods that struck the south-eastern part of West Timor and claimed hundreds of victims from among the East Timorese refugees in West Timor, including women and children, have demonstrated the need to speed up the return of refugees and above all for their reintegration into East Timorese society in good conditions.

We welcome the good cooperation between UNTAET and the Indonesian Government, as well as the specialized agencies in the field, which has enabled the relocation of the affected East Timorese refugees to other areas and the delivery of humanitarian assistance. We also welcome the calming of the security situation, in itself an encouraging sign for the advancement of economic activity and has a positive impact on public order, which remains a delicate area that requires follow-up on a daily basis.

There is also a need to emphasize UNTAET's efforts and achievements in the area of creating jobs to meet a growing need for employment. In this regard, it is important to lay down a general policy in this sector that will make it possible to ensure the participation of the East Timorese in the establishment of an economic environment that is conducive to peace.

We believe that the economic aspect is one of the major priorities to which particular attention must be paid by the international community, the donor countries and the international financial institutions. The post-conflict period and its humanitarian and economic needs require intensive efforts so that peace can be established for the long term. We welcome the donors' conference that will take place next June in Lisbon, which will make it possible, we hope, to free up additional financial resources very much needed for the improvement of living conditions and the reconstruction of the country's infrastructure.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate my delegation's congratulations to UNTAET for all the efforts it is undertaking in all areas, despite the difficulties in the field.

Mr. Krokhmal (Ukraine): Thank you, Mr. President, for convening this important meeting of the Security Council, and thanks also to Mr. Hédi Annabi for his comprehensive and informative briefing on the activities of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) and the situation in East Timor during the past month. The situation has been extremely difficult following the emergency that resulted from extensive flooding. It was with deepest regret that my delegation heard the reports of the tragic loss of human life and the extensive destruction of property in West and East Timor. UNTAET responded urgently and provided assistance to the Indonesian Government's relief efforts. We would like to express our appreciation to all those involved in these operations.

The first issue I would like to touch upon is the refugee situation. My delegation is pleased to know that the total number of returnees to East Timor had exceeded 160,000 by the end of last month. By the number of those who have decided to return, one could measure, in fact, the progress made towards regaining

normality in East Timor. However, we are concerned that, according to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, repatriation from West Timor has decreased over the past few weeks, presumably due to increasing reports of harassment of those returnees inside East Timor. In this regard, my delegation underlines the importance of continued efforts on the part of UNTAET and the other international agencies concerned to facilitate the return of an estimated 125,000 refugees who remain in West Timor to their places of origin in safety and dignity. Clearly, all these people have to be given an opportunity to determine freely where they want to go and settle.

More often than not, economic reconstruction forms an integral part of peacekeeping. We believe that the economic and social conditions in East Timor are areas which clearly warrant further and more focused action. We are encouraged to hear from Mr. Annabi that the Secretariat works actively with the World Bank and other financial institutions to accelerate the pace of both contributions received by to the United Nations Trust Fund and the disbursements on the ground.

The start of a number of rehabilitation projects has been mentioned. However, it is disappointing that the progress achieved in this respect has sometimes been very slow. Of course, this task is a complex one which also requires essential input from all the partners. We would be interested to be briefed on the grant agreement recently concluded with the World Bank to help revamp the health sector. We believe that this project should be given priority attention.

The capacity of the entire political process in East Timor will be extremely limited until the local population is involved in various matters of governance. In our view, UNTAET acts with this perspective in mind. There have been many experiences of successful cooperation at the local level between the East Timorese and the international presence in East Timor since the district advisory councils were set up. Ukraine highly appreciates the important work the Administration continues to perform in the development of the private sector along with setting up the civil service. In this context, we welcome the inauguration of the Civil Service Academy.

Turning to the security issue, the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding on security, boundary-crossing, the passage of refugees and the provision of humanitarian assistance along the border between East and West Timor seems to be keeping pace with the expectations of the international community. The number of major incidents, the briefing indicates, has declined significantly. The security situation is generally stable. However, some outstanding issues remain. In this context, I would like especially to stress the significant role played by the civilian police component of UNTAET. The basic task of the civilian police — to maintain a security presence throughout the country and in this way law and order in East Timor — is essential to carrying out the UNTAET mandate. We would be grateful if the Secretariat could comment in a more detailed manner on the recent developments regarding the indigenous police force.

The international community has invested heavily in the reconciliation and reconstruction process in East Timor. But even more extensive international involvement will still be needed in East Timor. Ukraine will remain actively engaged.

Mr. Keita (Mali) (*spoke in French*): First, I wish to express to the Secretariat my delegation's great appreciation for the information provided and to reiterate our support for the efforts made by the Secretary-General in the context of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET).

At the briefing on East Timor on 27 April, we were able to find out about the development of the situation in the country, which was generally positive. Nevertheless, questions such as the return of refugees, border security, the reconstruction of the country and employment were urgent challenges for UNTAET.

The information provided today on what has happened since 27 April shows that once again UNTAET is moving on the right path and has embarked on a gradual process. At the economic level, my delegation welcomes the increase in the number of private companies, which today has reached a total of 2000. This favours the decline in crime, which was a result of people being out of work. At this security level, we welcome the establishment of a Joint Border Commission and encourage UNTAET to pursue the training of local police to cope with persistent crime and to maintain law and order.

At the political level, Mr. Annabi mentioned earlier the creation of political parties and the beginning of political activities. My delegation,

therefore, would like Mr. Annabi to give us more information on these two points. What do the Timorese think about these political parties, and how do they see independence in general? We feel that it is not superfluous to have public awareness campaigns directed towards the population in order to avoid passions or violence related to such events.

UNTAET is arriving at a crossroads. Apart from the reconstruction and stabilization of East Timor and establishing security there, it must resolutely embark on the process of establishing the various institutions so as to place the country on the path of independence. The involvement of the Timorese people at this point should be decisive.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of China.

As are others, we also are grateful to Assistant Secretary-General Annabi for his briefing. The Chinese delegation is relieved to learn that the situation in East Timor remains stable. We also would like to pay a special tribute to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Vieira de Mello, and to his staff for the great deal of work that they have accomplished under difficult circumstances.

The Chinese Ambassador to Indonesia recently visited East Timor. We are under the impression that the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) has made tangible progress in the maintenance of law and order, enacting laws, rebuilding housing and infrastructure, creating employment and in training and capacity-building. We support its work in these areas.

The most pressing problem in East Timor at present is the serious unemployment situation. The continuation of this problem will have a negative impact on the security situation there. We hope that greater efforts can be made by UNTAET in creating employment opportunities.

The East Timorese people have high expectations for the United Nations. When these expectations are not met, it is understandable that people begin to lose patience. The United Nations cannot remain indifferent to the frustration and disappointment experienced by the East Timorese people. It is necessary for UNTAET to take measures to allow faster participation of more local people in the transitional work, so that they can learn how to govern their own country.

I resume my function as President of the Council. I shall now give the floor to Mr. Annabi to respond to the questions raised.

Mr. Annabi: There have been a lot of questions raised by members of the Council, and I will try to answer as best I can. I want to apologize in advance if I do not reply with the degree of detail that some delegations might expect. This is my third briefing to the Council today, and it is not always easy for me to master every detail on every operation on a given day.

I was asked about the status of the United Nations Trust Fund. Contributions to this Trust Fund amount today to $28.6 million. A total of $14.1 million out of these $28.6 have either been spent, meaning disbursed, or committed to various priority activities, including the reconstruction of public buildings, which is of course a very important requirement given the level of destruction that took place in the wake of the consultation last year.

As regards the situation of the World Bank Trust Fund, that Fund has received a total of $38.4 million out of the $147 million that were pledged during the Tokyo conference at the end of last year. The level of expenditure remains low and represents about $2 million at this time, but now that the Bank has completed the general procedures regarding the initiation of some of the projects that are foreseen, we expect that the disbursement will increase fairly quickly in the coming weeks and months. In fact, a number of agreements with the World Bank totalling $30 million to $40 million are near to being finalized in the health, agriculture and education sectors, where specific projects have been identified. We also understand that projects to be funded under the first instalment of the $29.8 million infrastructure project of the World Bank, which was agreed in March with the Asian Development Bank, are underway, and that the first emergency road contracts, representing some $4.5 million, will be mobilized in June, next month.

Finally, on this particular issue, let me say that we hope that the Lisbon donor meeting, which will take place next month, will provide a good opportunity to take stock of where we are in terms of implementing these rehabilitation and reconstruction projects and to assess what further steps will need to be taken. I also wish to assure members of the Council that we have

done our best at this end to try and cut through some of the red tape to facilitate disbursements. In fact, the Comptroller had authorized the World Bank to borrow money from the United Nations Trust Fund pending completion of its own procedures regarding the initiation of the implementation of some of the projects that were scheduled to be funded from its own Trust Fund.

The second important issue raised was the issue of benchmarks on the path to independence and the longer-term vision of UNTAET in this regard. I mentioned in my briefing last month some of the benchmarks that have been identified and on which consultations with the East Timorese are continuing. I think it is important to understand that the implementation of these benchmarks touches on very important issues for the East Timorese. Some of them have strong views on some of these issues and we need, of course, to respect their views so that, when we do come forward with a more elaborated presentation of these benchmarks, we do so with their support and cooperation.

Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello will probably be able to come to New York following the Lisbon donor meeting next month. I believe that we, and he in particular, will have more to say on this subject at that time. But again, I want to repeat that these issues cannot be decided independently by UNTAET and that we need to work with the East Timorese and to respect their views. I think that an important timeline in this regard will be the congress of the National Council of Timorese Resistance, which is expected to be held in August and which, I think and hope, will help the Timorese to come to a more precise definition of their views in this regard.

The next question related to the security situation inside East Timor and the level of criminality. The question was: Is this criminality related to the economic situation and to the social dislocation which East Timor has experienced, or does it have a political character? I think the answer is that it is essentially linked to the economic situation; to the very high degree of unemployment, which stood at some 80 per cent when UNTAET was established; and to the very deep social disruption and dislocation that have resulted in the country from the events of last September.

I was also asked about the division of labour between the military component of UNTAET and the civilian police component. The division there is the same as what we have in other theatres where we are present. The police are in charge of the basic law and order functions and, in the case of East Timor as in the case of Kosovo, we have been given direct law enforcement responsibilities. At the same time, the military component provides and ensures the wider security environment in which the police component can carry out its functions. The military component can also be called upon, of course, to provide back-up to the police should situations develop with which the police are not able to cope. This is the same set-up as we have in Kosovo and Bosnia and that we have had in other peacekeeping operations.

There have also been questions on the reduction of the military component of UNTAET. As I indicated, UNTAET is proposing to carry out an initial reduction of some 500 troops between now and October, which would be pulled out of the eastern sector of East Timor, which has been fairly quiet. This fits, of course, into a wider programme, a wider plan, that would foresee, if the security situation remains stable, further reductions by next April. It is envisaged at this time that there could be a total reduction of 50 per cent of the troops in Sector East by April and a further reduction by the summer of 2001. But all of this is predicated upon a stable security situation.

UNTAET will continue to review the situation and to propose and implement reductions in other sectors if it assesses that that has become possible. We do not believe in micromanaging or directing this process from here. We believe that the force on the ground should have a reasonable degree of autonomy in this regard and the capacity to propose the necessary additional reductions in due course.

There was also a question on the current efforts of UNTAET to train the local Timorese police force. This is, of course, one of the two main tasks of the UNTAET police component, the first being to ensure the maintenance of law and order and the second being to develop an East Timorese police force that can take over from UNTAET in due course. The East Timor police college, as I may have mentioned last month, opened on 27 March and the first group of trainees is scheduled to graduate from the school on 2 June, so the process of training the future Timorese police forces is under way. Under present plans, it is foreseen that a

total of 3,000 East Timorese will have been trained and will graduate from the police school by the end of next year. In the meantime, UNTAET is also working with what is called the "police assistance group", which is composed of former East Timorese police officers who are assisting UNTAET, after being retrained as necessary.

There was also a question on the present state of payment of assessed contributions to the UNTAET budget. I must confess that I do not have that at my fingertips. There is a monthly publication issued by the comptroller that provides detailed information on the status of each peacekeeping account and can be easily consulted. What I can say is that, of course, delays in payment of assessed contributions make it difficult for us to reimburse troop contributors in a timely manner. This has been a daunting problem over the last few years because, if I may say so, troop contributors get punished twice: they go out to the field and take the risks that some of these operations have to face, and then at the same time they do not get reimbursed in a timely manner. So I can only hope that the UNTAET budget is current, but we will need to look at that monthly report.

I was also asked to provide information on the ongoing consultation and discussions between UNTAET and the National Council of Timorese Resistance (CNRT) on the future of the Armed Forces for the National Liberation of East Timor (Falintil). I mentioned last month that the East Timorese had clearly indicated the wish to have a security force in East Timor that would not be part of the police and would not be a gendarmerie-type force. In this regard, Xanana Gusmao has written to the Secretary-General, who has assured him that the United Nations would respect the decision that the East Timorese will take on how best to ensure the security of the country when it becomes independent. In other words, we have recognized that an independent East Timor will have the sovereign right to establish a security force, but at the same time it is important that, prior to the formation of such a force, its framework be defined in accordance with the principles of civilian oversight, democratic accountability, universal recruitment and international human rights norms and standards.

We also feel that a decision as to the timing, process and setting up of such a force would need to be taken in full consideration of the findings of the study that will be undertaken by the Kings College in London. The Kings College has offered to carry out a study on the possible options in this regard, and the Timorese have welcomed this initiative. This study will be conducted by a multinational team. It is expected that it will take about six weeks and will begin fairly soon. It is agreed with the Timorese that, on that basis, the various options will be considered and discussed. The Secretary-General has, of course, drawn their attention to the fact that the decision to establish a security force will have important long-term external and domestic implications that need to be viewed in the context of regional security, the future constitutional framework and its possible impact on the economic situation of the country. So this is where things stand on this issue.

As regards the registration of refugees now being carried out by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the purpose of this exercise is to have a reliable view of the exact number of refugees, the composition of the families, their occupation or former occupation and place of origin in East Timor. This will provide a data base that will be used for purposes of assistance and for the determination and promotion of durable solutions, which are, of course, either voluntary repatriation, or resettlement in West Timor or other regions of Indonesia.

On the question as to whether UNHCR will be trying to ascertain the wishes of the East Timorese, the answer is yes, UNHCR will try to do this, if and when circumstances permit. But we have to remember that the security conditions prevailing in the camps, to which I alluded in my briefing and which clearly remain precarious, do not always make that possible. UNHCR expects to complete this registration process by the end of June. UNHCR is continuing its efforts to promote voluntary repatriation on the one hand, and it is continuing, on the other hand, to discuss with the Indonesian Government and other agencies concerned the preparation of a local integration plan for those who will decide to remain in West Timor. My UNHCR colleagues tell me that they expect this plan to be ready by July of this year.

Another question relates to what is being done in East Timor to ensure that the refugees can return safely. This is, of course, arranged locally with the representatives of the Timorese, with the local communities. We ensure that UNTAET police are deployed in those areas, and there is also monitoring of

the returnees both by UNHCR and UNTAET once they return. There have been a few incidents when some of the returnees have been suspected, rightly or wrongly, by the local population of belonging to, or having been active in, the militia, but, by and large, that process has so far proceeded without too many difficulties.

There was also a question on the status of national reconciliation and how that is proceeding. Clearly, the best expression of national reconciliation in East Timor is the National Consultative Council. The National Consultative Council includes not only the CNRT, which is itself a broad umbrella organization for several political parties, but also includes representatives from the pro-autonomy parties. You will recall that three seats had been reserved for the pro-autonomy parties in the National Consultative Council. Two of those have been filled. The third one has not yet been filled, because the party concerned was somewhat controversial, to say the least, and emotions in some quarters in East Timor are still running high after last year's tragic events.

There was a question on the recent agreement with the World Bank in the health sector. I must confess that I do not have detailed information on that today, but I can tell the Council the following about the health sector: some 80 health facilities have been opened throughout East Timor. These include 50 mobile clinics, involving some 838 health workers. The interim health authority that has been established for East Timor is now staffed with 29 East Timorese professionals, 13 district health officers and seven international staff. It is envisaged that each district will have a lead non-governmental organization in the health field, which will work in that district and carry out programmes on behalf of the Transitional Administration. At the present time, Médecins sans Frontières is present in a number of districts in East Timor and has the largest presence among non-governmental organizations in the territory.

I think that covers some of the main issues that have been raised. Again, I apologize if I have not been able to provide detailed answers to all the questions that have been raised.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Mr. Annabi for his comprehensive and very detailed responses.

Mr. van Walsum (Netherlands): I am grateful to Mr. Annabi, and I apologize for inflicting such detailed questions on him, knowing full well that he has in fact been briefing us all day long.

Mr. Annabi has now supplied us with further information on the reductions in the military component of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) that are currently envisaged. I would like to say only that, obviously, we appreciate receiving that information, but that my delegation continues to insist on a proper discussion of the military and security situation in East Timor, either in an open Council meeting or in consultations of the whole, before any of these envisaged decisions become final.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I believe that the President for the month of June will take note of the request made by the representative of the Netherlands.

Let me take this opportunity to thank representatives for the kind words they addressed to me in the course of their statements.

There are no further speakers on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.